



City of San José

# VISION ZERO

## ACTION PLAN

January 2020







# MESSAGE FROM CITY LEADERS

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SAM LICCARDO



JOHN RISTOW



EDDIE GARCIA

One traffic death is one too many, which is why we remain committed to safer streets across San José. Traffic deaths are preventable. Our City adopted a Vision Zero transportation safety initiative in 2015, as our City's commitment to prioritize street safety and ensure all road users are safe – whether you walk, bike, drive, ride transit, or use our City's growing mobility options.

Since this program began in San José, significant groundwork has occurred towards building a foundation to achieve Vision Zero – including data analytics, corridor safety audits, collaboration with stakeholders, construction of pedestrian and bicyclist safety projects, taking critical steps to begin rebuilding our police department's traffic enforcement resources, participating in a state task force on lowering traffic fatalities, and pursuit of the legal ability to implement automated speed enforcement technology.

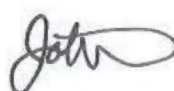
This updated Vision Zero Action Plan creates proactive priority strategy areas to turn San José's traffic fatality uptrend in recent years into a downtrend. Reversing the trend will take city investment as well as citizen engagement in street safety.

**This is a call to action for government and citizens alike.** San José welcomes your interest and participation in helping move our city towards the goal of eliminating all traffic fatalities, and significantly reducing severe injury crashes.

Be safe,



SAM LICCARDO  
Mayor

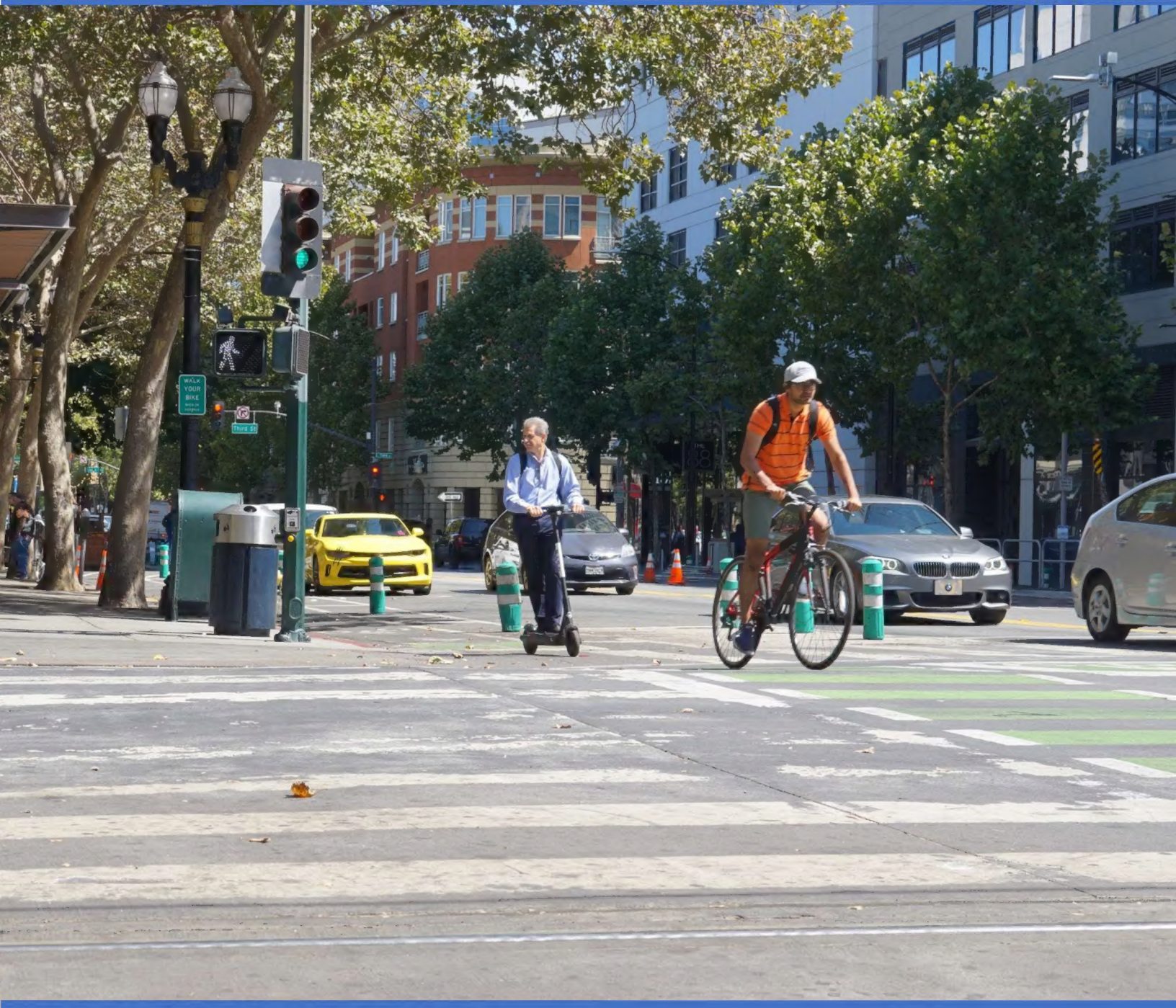


JOHN RISTOW  
Director of Transportation



EDDIE GARCIA  
Chief of Police





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This Vision Zero San José Action Plan is dedicated to those who have lost their lives in a traffic crash, to those who have been severely injured, and to their families and friends. Their loss inspires us to do all we can to eliminate traffic deaths and provide safe streets for all.

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# MOVING TOWARD ZERO TRAFFIC DEATHS AND PROVIDING SAFE STREETS FOR ALL

## Executive Summary

In May 2015, San José became the fourth city in the nation to formally adopt a Vision Zero transportation safety initiative. Vision Zero cities strive to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, fatalities and severe injuries (KSI) caused by traffic collisions, by following the data. Traffic deaths in San José have grown 37% in the ten-year period from 2009 to 2018, during a period when the city's population grew less than 10%.

Follow San José's data and progress at [visionzerosj.org](https://visionzerosj.org).

This action plan identifies six priority action areas using near-term strategies with the aim to reduce traffic fatalities in our city.

1. Build a robust data analytics tool
2. Form a Vision Zero task force
3. Increase Traffic Enforcement and prioritize KSI-reduction strategies
4. Increase community outreach and engagement to build a culture of safety
5. Implement Quick build data-driven safety improvements
6. Equity: Focus resources on high-KSI corridors and districts



# A VISION FOR STREET SAFETY

Vision Zero was initiated in Sweden in 1997 as a national street safety policy to eliminate traffic fatalities and reduce severe injuries. As of 2016, Sweden had 2.8 road deaths per 100,000 residents compared with 12.4 in the United States. Vision Zero's early US adopters, New York City and San Francisco, are noteworthy for using its traffic fatality data driven focus to innovate multidisciplinary strategies that have led to decreases in traffic fatality numbers at a time when traffic fatalities in other US cities have been trending upward.

The effectiveness of Vision Zero comes from a clear top goal of reducing and eventually eliminating traffic fatalities through collaboration among city leaders, roadway designers and operations, traffic enforcement, vehicle manufacturers, transit operators, government regulators, educators, public health officials, community advocates, technology companies, and the public.

## CORE PRINCIPLES

The core principles that guide Vision Zero San José are:



Traffic Deaths are preventable and **unacceptable**



Human life and **safety takes priority** over mobility



Transportation system that accounts for **human error**



**Speed** is a fundamental predictor of crash survival



**Safe human behaviors**, education, engineering and enforcement are essential to a safe system



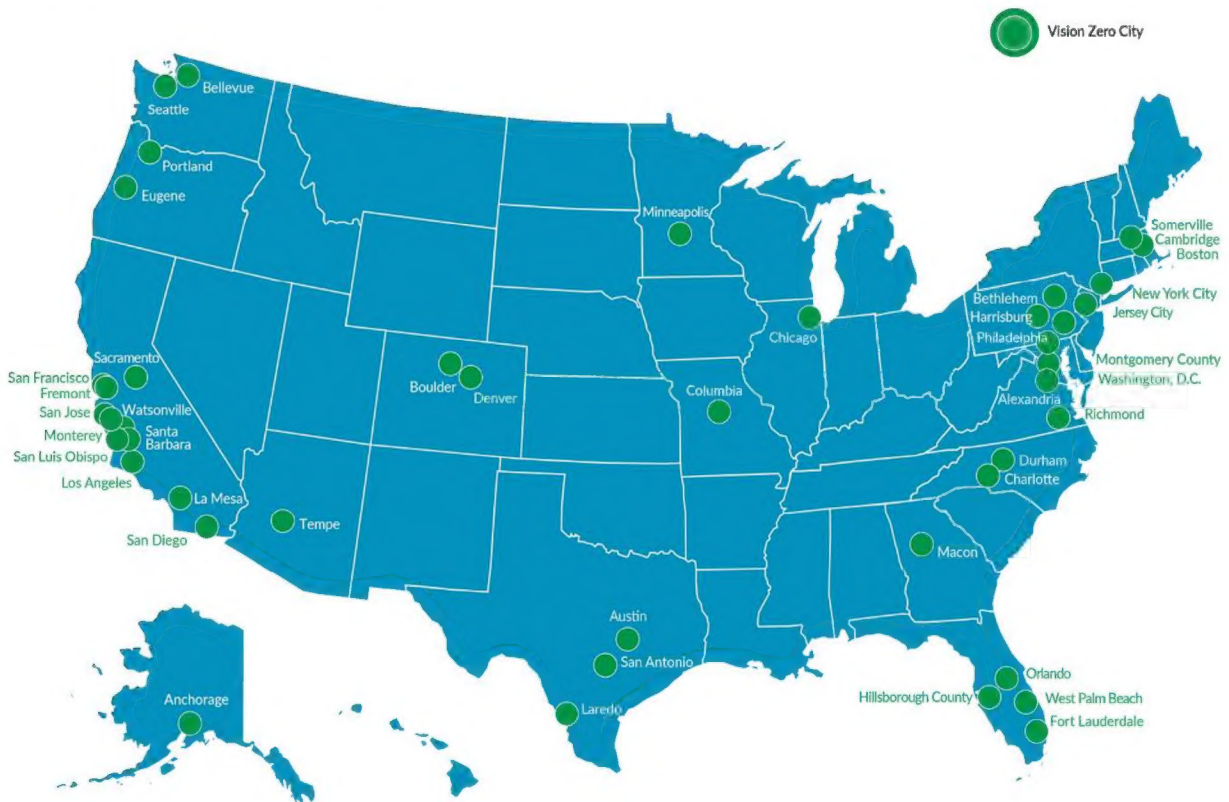
**Policy alignment** at all levels of government



# VISION ZERO IN THE UNITED STATES

Over 40 cities nationwide have adopted a Vision Zero policy, including 11 in California, and are part of the [Vision Zero Network](#) as of February 2019.

## Vision Zero Cities



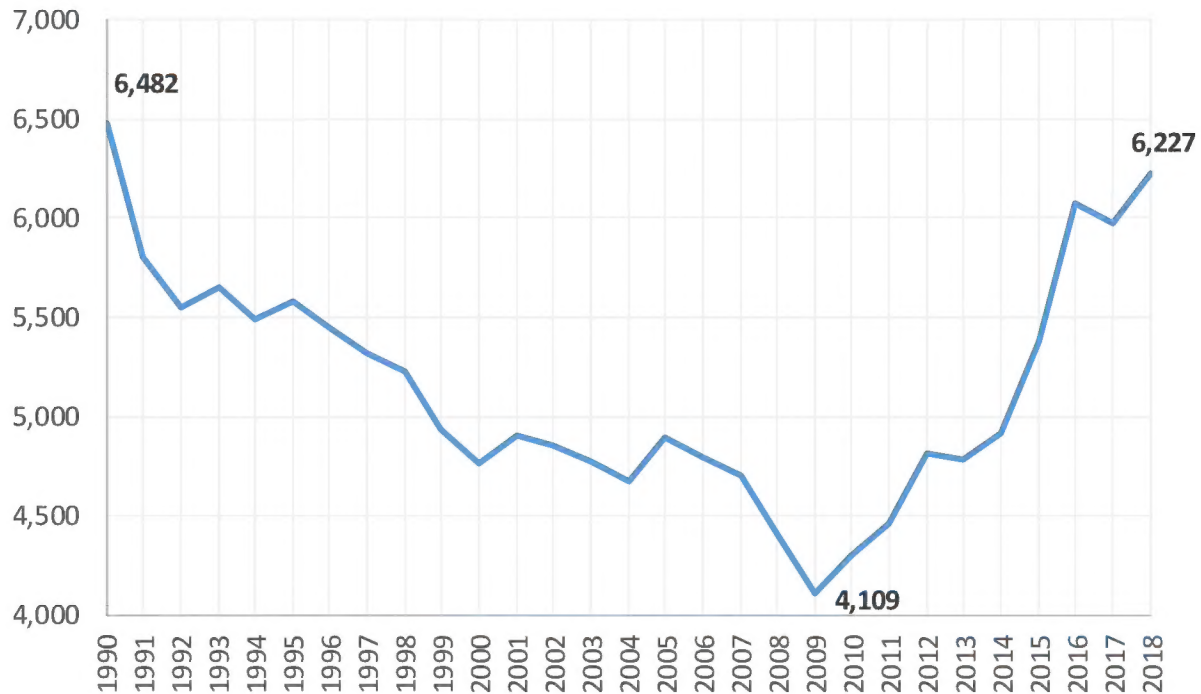
February 2019

### A Vision Zero City meets the following minimum standards:

- Sets clear goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries
- The Mayor has publicly, officially committed to Vision Zero
- A Vision Zero plan or strategy is in place, or the Mayor has committed to doing so in clear time frame.
- Key departments (including Police, Transportation and Public Health) are engaged



## NATIONAL PEDESTRIAN FATALITY TREND



Nationally, nearly 40,000 people die as the result of traffic collisions every year, making it the second highest cause of violence-related injury death according to the Centers for Disease Control. Pedestrian fatalities have been rising starkly, since hitting a low in 2009. Suspected factors include the growing popularity of light trucks and SUVs (which are heavier and hit pedestrians higher) and distraction from smartphone use.

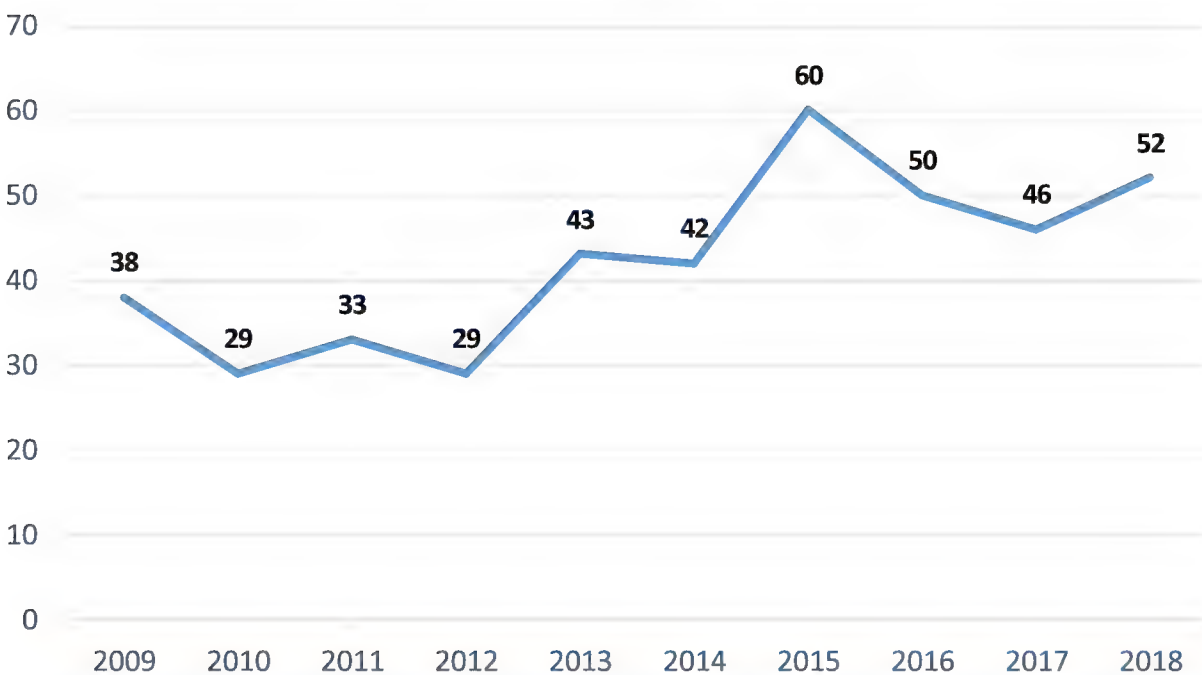




# VISION ZERO SAN JOSÉ

The number of traffic fatalities in San José are trending upward, consistent with the national trend. Between 2009 and 2018, traffic fatalities have increased 37% during a time when the population grew less than 10%. Of course our San José neighbors killed in traffic fatalities are not just statistics, they are our friends, family, and neighbors who don't come home. In 2018, 52 people died in San José as the result of traffic collisions.

## SAN JOSÉ TRAFFIC FATALITIES (2009-2018)



### 2018 SAN JOSÉ COLLISION TRENDS



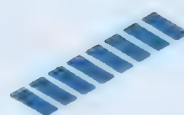
**87%** of all fatalities occurred on major roadways



**56%** of all fatalities occurred at night.



**38%** of fatalities involved adults age 65 or older.



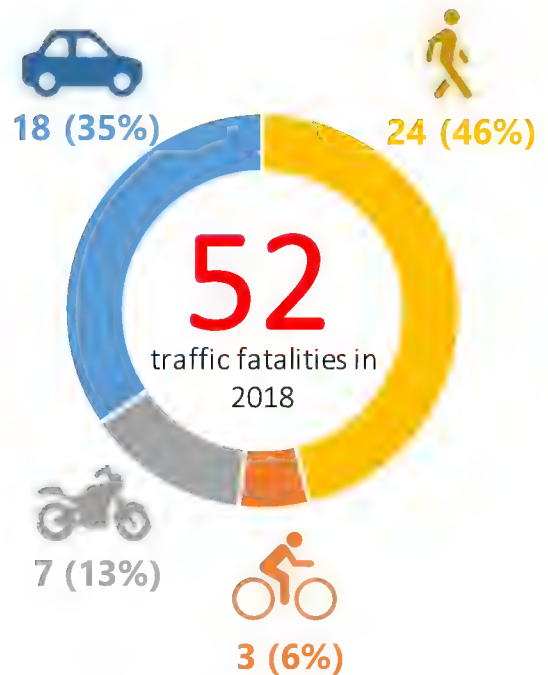
**Over 60%** of pedestrian fatalities occurred outside crosswalks



## FATALITIES BY MODE (2018)

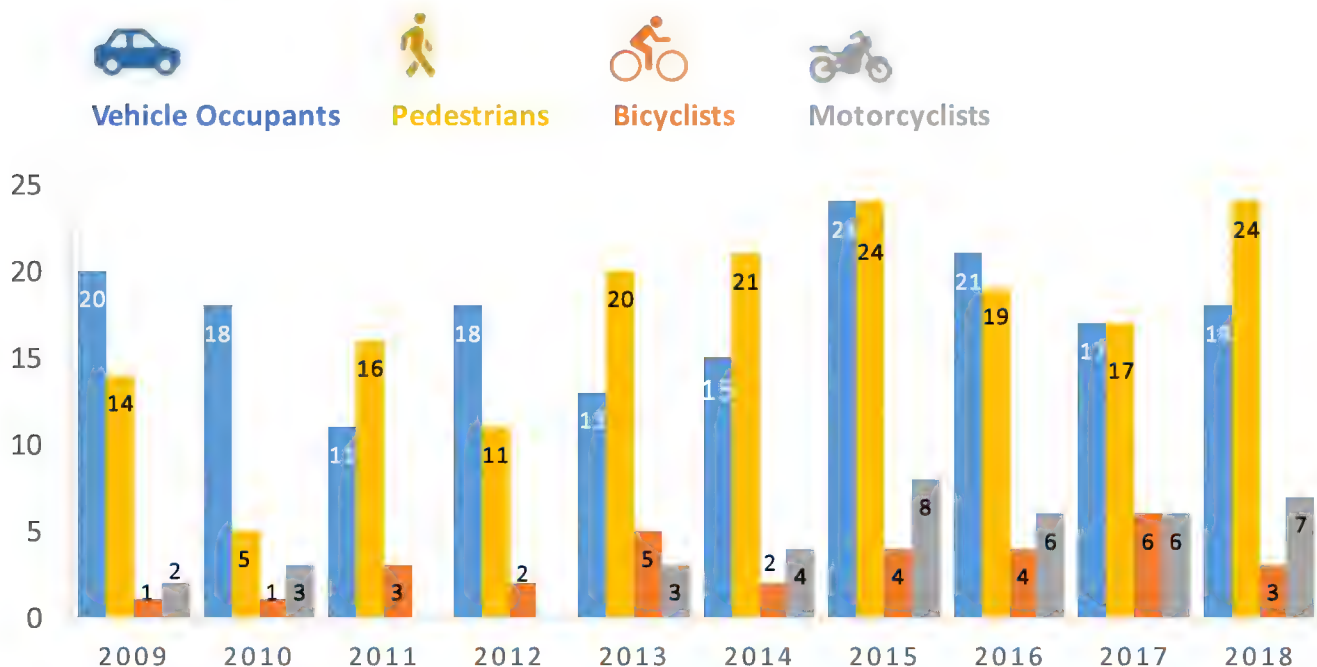
In San José, the largest segment of traffic fatalities are people hit while walking, despite being a small share among transportation modes. Motor vehicle occupants compose the second largest group.

New mobility trends are not yet included in these statistics, as there are no reported fatalities or severe injuries involving e-scooters. San José has logged more than three million trips on e-scooters.



Pedestrian fatalities are growing;  
2015 and 2018 had the most on record

## SAN JOSÉ: FATALITIES BY MODE (2009-2018)







# SAFE STREETS AND MODE SHIFT GOALS

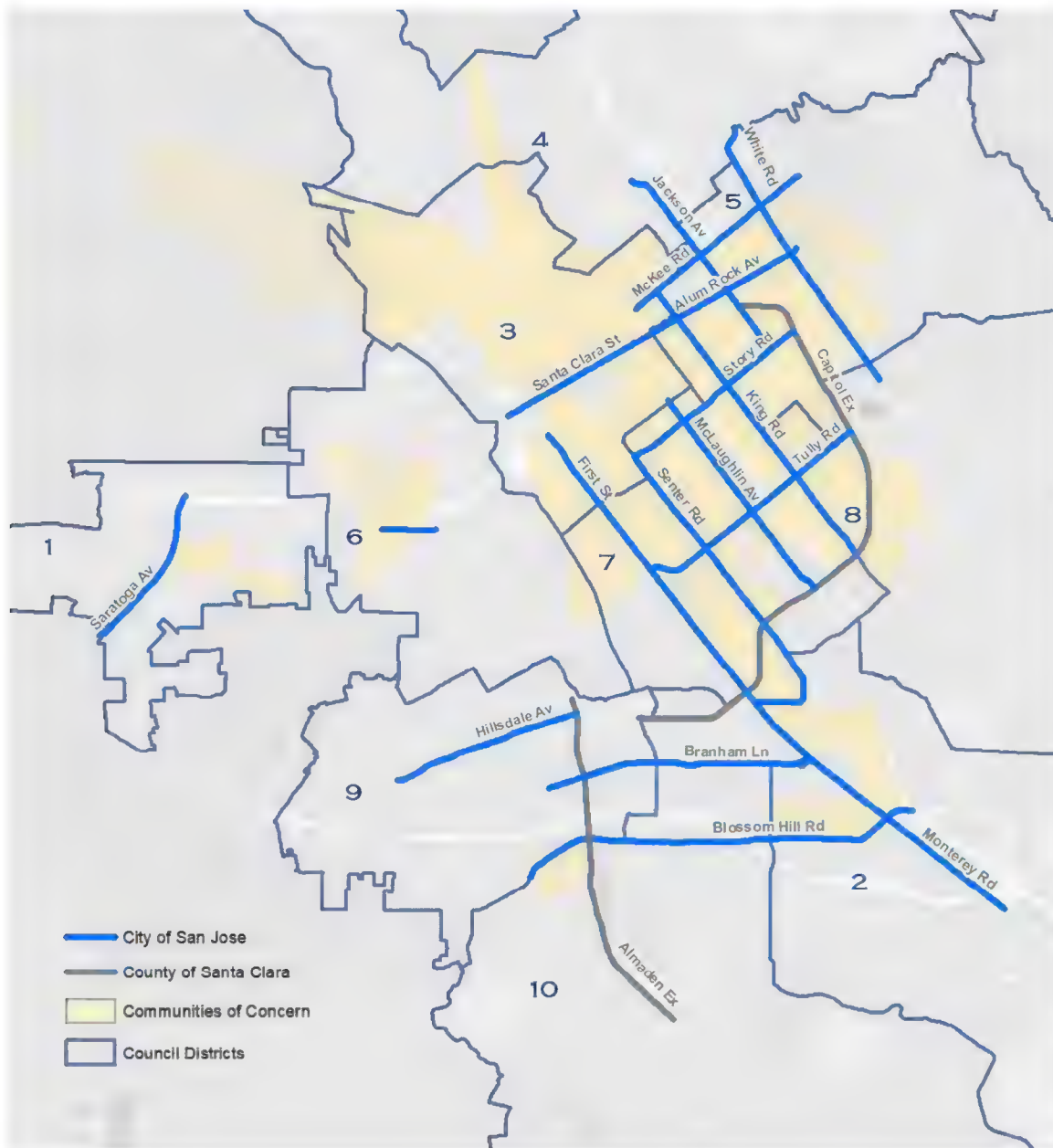
Vision Zero cities strive to lower and ultimately eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries. Safety improvements transform high injury streets—usually those with high pedestrian and bicyclist exposure—into safer and more appealing places to walk and bike. In this way, Vision Zero supports central goals of [San José's General Plan 2040](#) to greatly decrease single occupancy vehicle mode share, and make sustainable options like walking, biking, emerging mobility, and transit more appealing. The same goals inform [Climate Smart San José](#), the Downtown Transportation Plan, [Better Bike Plan 2025](#), American Cities Climate Challenge, and Urban Villages.

Vision Zero's focus on traffic fatality and severe injury reduction brings to light that the City will need to develop diversified and quickly implementable strategies to build awareness of the issue and deliver safety results. It directs investments to be prioritized in areas experiencing a high incidence of fatal and severe injury crashes. Vision Zero cities study safety project design effectiveness to ensure safety investments are delivering the intended improvements.





# PRIORITY SAFETY CORRIDORS



Based on a comprehensive review of citywide crash data, 17 major streets have been identified and established as Priority Safety Corridors (PSCs). These corridors have a high incidence of fatalities and severe injuries due to traffic collisions. 15 PSCs (56 mi) are under City of San José jurisdiction, and 2 PSCs (14 mi) are under Santa Clara County jurisdiction.

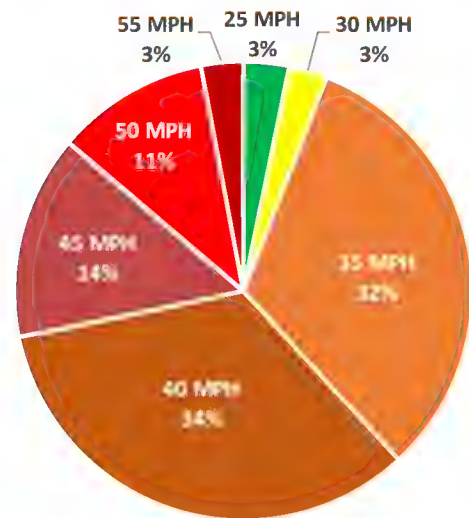
# VEHICLE SPEED IS THE TOP FACTOR

Speed reduction is at the core of the Vision Zero strategy. Across all modes of transportation, higher speeds increase the risk of a crash occurring, while significantly increasing the risk of severe injury or death. Pedestrians are at the highest risk of injury as they are without the protection of an automobile.

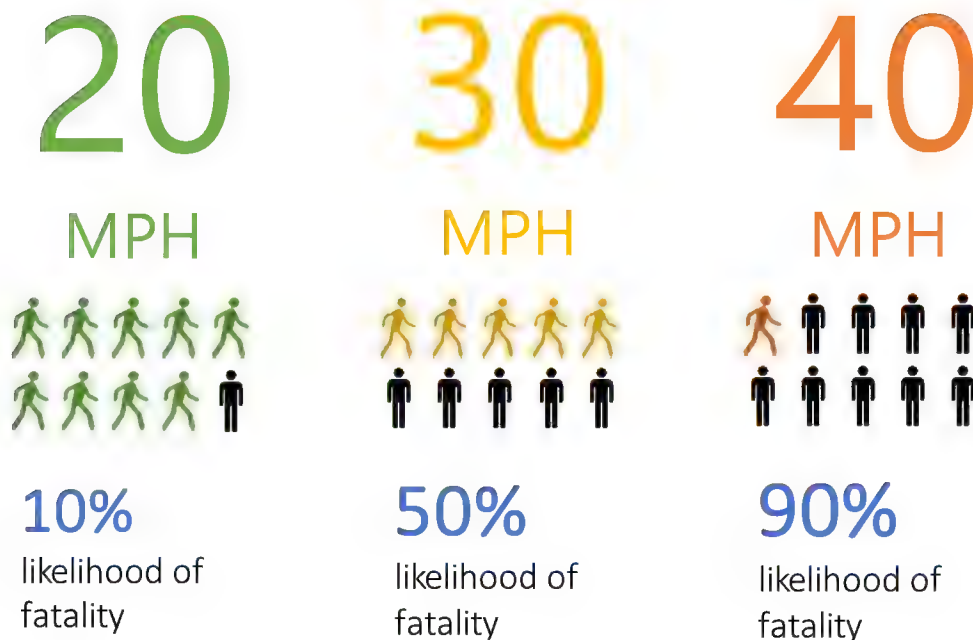
Speed limits on San José's Priority Safety Corridors range from 25 to 55 mph. 94% of PSCs have speed limits above 30 mph. A pedestrian hit by a vehicle traveling at 30 mph only has a 50% chance of survival.

To dramatically reduce traffic fatalities and severe injuries, our roadways must be redesigned to slow traffic, and to become safe and more comfortable for walking and biking.

## POSTED SPEEDS ON PRIORITY SAFETY CORRIDORS BY MILEAGE



## IF HIT BY A VEHICLE TRAVELING AT









# HIGH LEGAL SPEEDS PLUS *SPEEDING*



More than 90% of the total mileage on San José's PSCs have a posted speed limit of 35 mph or higher. The likelihood of a pedestrian surviving a vehicle hit at the legal speed limit on the vast majority of these corridors is less than half. Older adults are more vulnerable. The median age of a pedestrian killed in a traffic crash in San José in 2018 was 56 years old.

## 2018 FATALITIES

People		Median Age
24		56 yrs
18		41 yrs
7		31 yrs
3		59 yrs



Vision Zero Priority Safety Corridor	Speed Limit (MPH)	Fatalities (2014-2018)
Monterey Road/First Street	35-55	16
Blossom Hill Road	40	4
Branham Lane	40	3
Hillsdale Avenue	40	5
Saratoga Avenue	40	2
Tully Road	40	10
Jackson Avenue	35-40	4
McKee Road	35-40	4
Senter Road	35-40	9
Story Road	35-40	4
Fruitdale Avenue	35	1
King Road	35	6
McLaughlin Avenue	35	9
White Road	35	4
Santa Clara Street	25-35	8
Almaden Expressway	50	6
Capitol Expressway	45-50	20

-  City of San José jurisdiction
-  County of Santa Clara jurisdiction



## IMPLEMENTING VISION ZERO

Dramatically reducing, and ultimately eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries will require a sustained long-term commitment. Significant additional resources are required to provide for more rigorous and systematic data analytics, delivery of corridor-based safety projects, engagement and education of the community to build awareness of Vision Zero, and expanded enforcement activities. The priority actions include the following strategic areas:

- 1 BUILD ROBUST DATA ANALYTICS TOOLS
- 2 FORM A VISION ZERO TASK FORCE
- 3 INCREASE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT AND PRIORITIZE KSI-REDUCTION STRATEGIES
- 4 INCREASE COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT TO BUILD A CULTURE OF SAFETY
- 5 IMPLEMENT QUICK BUILD DATA-DRIVEN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS
- 6 EQUITY: FOCUS RESOURCES ON HIGH-KSI CORRIDORS AND DISTRICTS





## ACTION 1

## BUILD ROBUST DATA ANALYTICS TOOLS

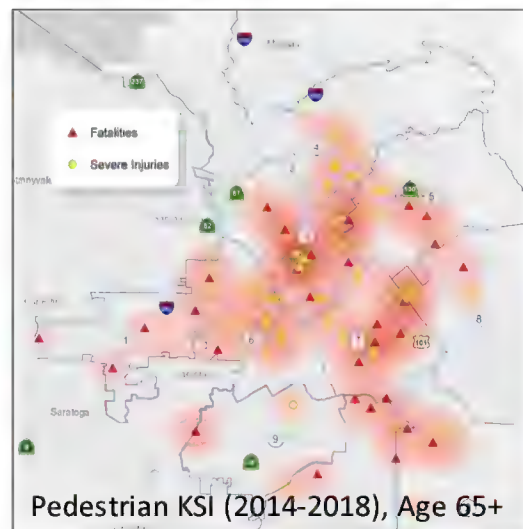
### Link data from Police, Fire, Trauma Centers, and the Medical Examiner-Coroner

In San José, crash data is collected by City police and the County Sheriff; public health injury data is collected by Santa Clara County agencies; and the County's Medical Examiner-Coroner's Office fatality data includes a determination of whether those that died are unhoused. San Francisco's Vision Zero program provides a best practice model of how to collect and link data from trauma hospitals, ambulances, and the Medical Examiner's office to data from the police department. San Francisco finds that 30% of KSI are not reflected in police data. San José will lead Santa Clara County to follow San Francisco's model.

**Target:** In two years, establish a database protocol to link city and county data.

### Identify Emerging Priority Geographies

By 2018, San José had identified 17 Priority Safety Corridors. In 2019, DOT analyzed fatalities by age to find people killed while walking or bicycling are typically older adults. DOT also worked with San José State University Urban Planning graduate students in GIS to identify new PSCs. Ongoing analyses using crash data to isolate emerging priority geographies and road user characteristics will help focus our priority action strategies.



**Target:** Report annually on priority intersections and corridor updates.



### Before/After Project Evaluation

San José is developing a project evaluation methodology based on Vision Zero best practices that will help the department track the relative crash reduction impacts of built projects, whether project tweaks are needed, and/or whether to keep existing treatments or pilot new more impactful treatments. The protocol will document project proposal design decisions, data types to collect to evaluate its effectiveness, and guidelines to follow in the future to evaluate whether the delivered project met its original safety design goals.

**Target:** Produce annual report of project progress and effectiveness.



## ACTION 2

## FORM A VISION ZERO TASK FORCE

Vision Zero is beyond the scope of the City's Department of Transportation and the Police Department. Vision Zero cities with the lowest rates of traffic fatalities per capita use a task force format, frequently led by an elected official, where representatives from city government and county agencies meet regularly to review data, develop strategies, and report on their initiatives' progress. A Vision Zero task force will help facilitate a holistic solution, and coordinate across silos, including to:

- Share and link crash data and public health data between city and county
- Involve police and fire departments in safer street designs
- Improve pedestrian safety across facilities: streets (DOT, Public Works, County), trails (Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services), expressways (County), transit (Valley Transportation Authority), and near construction sites (Planning, Public Works, DOT)
- Provide quarterly reporting of Vision Zero project status and spending

San José will continue to involve the local advocacy community, which already provides input to the Vision Zero Action Plan development through the Vision Zero advisory committee.





### Task Force Work Plan

San José envisions that the initial work plan of the task force would include:

- Quarterly traffic fatality and severe injury reporting
- Review quarterly traffic enforcement, citations given to Top 5 KSI causes
- Reach vulnerable road users through other departments' existing efforts
- Work with the VTA to make areas around light rail and bus stops safer to navigate
- Coordinate education campaigns with enforcement activities
- Improve the quality of crash and injury data
- Collaborate with the County of Santa Clara on Expressways
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities along construction sites



## ACTION 3

## INCREASE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT AND PRIORITIZE KSI-REDUCTION STRATEGIES

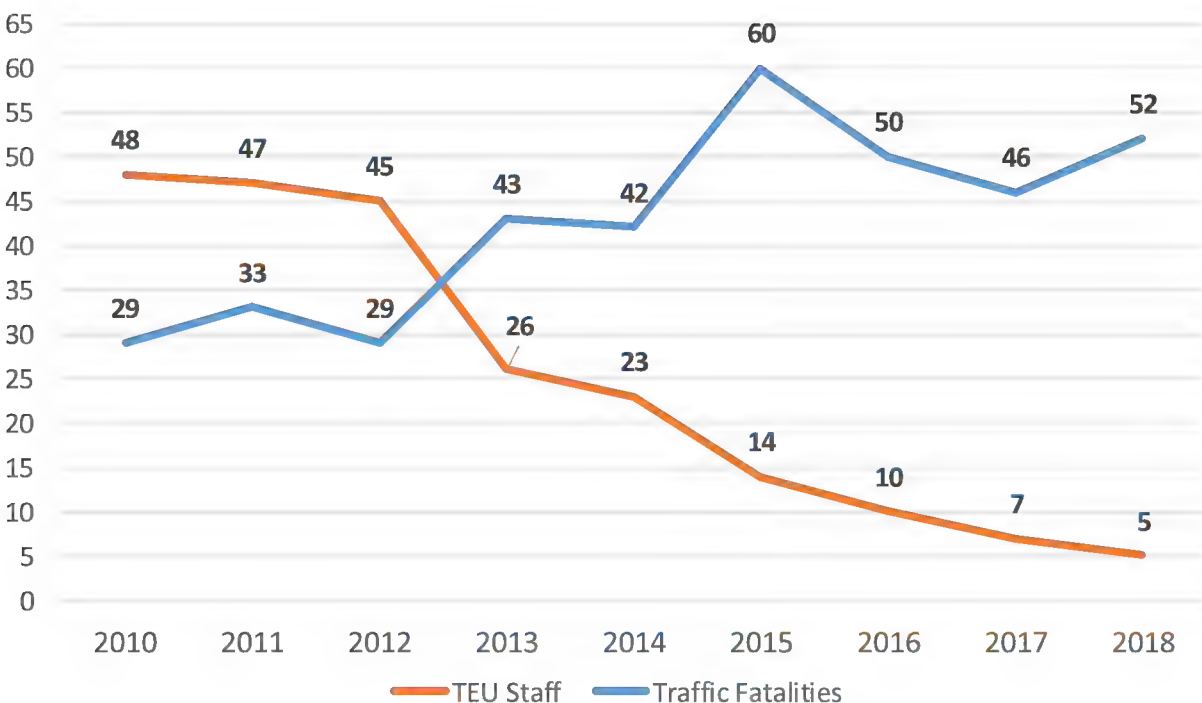
### Increase Traffic Enforcement Staff

San José Police Department Traffic Enforcement Unit (TEU) resources declined 90% from 48 officers (2010) to five (2018). TEU staffing recently increased to 10 in October 2019. Shift coverage is currently limited to weekdays until 4pm.

**Target:** More traffic enforcement and coverage during evenings and weekends.



### Traffic Fatalities vs. TEU Staffing







## ACTION 4

## INCREASE COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT TO BUILD A CULTURE OF SAFETY

### Create and Implement a Safety Messaging Strategy

Safety messaging can take many media forms from traditional billboard advertising or targeted digital media posts, to strategic campaigns to boost awareness, such as coordinating outreach about the negative impacts of speeding with periods of increased speeding enforcement.

San José plans to hire a planning and marketing consultant to craft an outreach strategy. In advance of an anticipated 2020 procurement process, in late 2019, DOT hired a Coro NorCal research fellow to contact other Vision Zero cities and prepare a visual report of media strategy and campaigns. The City will collaborate with County partners and other cities on the safety messaging effort. To fund design, focus groups, production, placement/distribution of outreach strategies is estimated to cost a minimum of \$300,000 annually.

**Target:** Hire professional media consultants to guide the City's effort and develop a strategy within 18 months.

### Reach the City's Vulnerable Communities

DOT reaches thousands of school children every year through Walk 'n' Roll and Traffic Safety Education. In the 10-year period between 2009-2018, injury crashes involving children ages 5-14 have declined 35%. Following the data, in 2019-2020, San José received a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety to do engagement work with senior pedestrians. In future years this could be expanded to focus on unsheltered pedestrians.

**Target:** Survey for increased awareness of Vision Zero among vulnerable populations.

### Start a South Bay chapter of Families for Safe Streets

Families for Safe Streets, a national non-profit advocacy group that aims to bring an end to preventable traffic violence through advocacy and support, is only open to the immediate family members of crash victims. San José has more than twice as many traffic fatalities as San Francisco in recent years. The existing San Francisco Bay Area chapter is far away and focused on San Francisco.

**Target:** Provide advocacy, peer support, and grief services in Santa Clara County.



### Use Inexpensive Materials to Build Safety Projects Quickly

The Better Bikeways project built downtown between September 2018 and spring 2019 is an example of a “quick build” project. Using primarily a toolkit of markings, signs, and bollards, DOT was able to quickly build a safer Complete Street design in two years on 11 miles instead of the typical five-year capital process. Because cities look for year-to-year improvements in reducing traffic fatalities, rapid response quick builds are a natural match for Vision Zero projects, producing significantly quicker safety results, until funding can be secured for comprehensive capital improvements. The projects can be iteratively tweaked to better improve safety outcomes when necessary.

San José plans to use a quick build approach to lower crashes and injuries based on data priorities and compare before/after crash and injury data to make sure changes are working. San José will apply for grants to fund quick build to capital project conversions and continue to condition developments to fund nearby safety improvements. The City will also pursue funding to implement quick build strategies on other arterial roadways.

An estimated \$20 million is needed to improve 56 miles on the 15 City-controlled Priority Safety Corridors.

**Target:** Build \$4 million per year (or approximately 11 miles) of quick-build projects.



## ACTION 6

## EQUITY: FOCUS RESOURCES ON HIGH-KSI CORRIDORS AND DISTRICTS

### Follow the Data: Prioritize High-KSI Corridors and Districts

There is a significant overlap between San José's Priority Safety Corridors with a high frequency of fatal and severe injury traffic collisions and the Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Communities of Concern – that is, communities that could be considered disadvantaged due to factors such as high levels of households with minority or low-income status, older adults, people with limited English proficiency, and people with disabilities.

This Action Plan prioritizes the major roadways, districts, and PSCs where the data shows that the highest concentrations of fatalities and severe injuries are occurring. As an example, over the last five years, District 7 has the highest number of both traffic fatalities and KSI. District 3 has the most crashes, and the most severe injuries, with the second highest fatalities and KSI.

Many of San José's Priority Safety Corridors run through MTC Communities of Concern.

**Target:** Prioritize safety funds spent per year on high-KSI roadways, districts, and PSCs.

### CRASHES BY COUNCIL DISTRICT (2014-2018)

Council District	Crashes	Fatal	Severe	Fatal + Severe KSI
1	1,499	9	43	52
2	1,342	20	41	61
3	5,544	34	118	152
4	2,517	17	75	92
5	3,378	17	92	109
6	3,031	21	110	131
7	3,469	52	111	163
8	1,673	20	38	58
9	1,874	15	64	79
10	1,692	24	63	87

(San José Council District map showing with PSCs on page 15)



## PROGRAMMED SAFETY INITIATIVES

### Senior Pedestrian Awareness

Older adults are San José's most vulnerable road users. In 2018, 24 pedestrians died – 46% of fatalities that year. Among pedestrians, nine were older adults – the highest age group – 38% of pedestrian deaths. Using a multilingual ad developed by San Francisco Vision Zero, this campaign, launched in 2019, is the first multicity Vision Zero safety messaging effort in the Bay Area.

The campaign builds on earlier Vision Zero safety banners that were installed on some of the Priority Safety Corridors on street poles, at schools, and on yard signs provided to residents. The senior safety message is also being deployed at Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) stations, on VTA bus tails, and streetlight poles.



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## PROGRAMMED SAFETY INITIATIVES

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### Speed Surveys/AB2363 Zero Traffic Fatality Task Force

Under the California Vehicle Code, cities conduct Engineering & Traffic Surveys to determine posted speed limits. The rules defining how speed surveys are used have resulted in raising speed limits on high injury streets in some cities despite the knowledge that high speed kills. San José participated in the 2019 California State Transportation Agency *Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force* to review how speed limits are set across the state.

### Walk ‘n’ Roll/Safe Routes to Schools

The Walk n’ Roll team promotes safe, active, and low carbon footprint transportation options to get to school. Started in 2012, the program now serves 55 San José K-12 schools.



### Access and Mobility Plan

Building on the City’s Envision 2040 General Plan and Climate Smart San José, the Access and Mobility Plan will create key performance indicators, frameworks and strategies, and a decision support system to increase walking, biking, and transit use, decrease auto dependence, and increase safety.

### Better Bike Plan 2025

Building on the Better Bikeways project, DOT is creating a new citywide bike plan that calls for completing a bike network that is safe, comfortable and convenient for all ages and abilities.

### Pedestrian Master Plan

San José DOT is working on creating a new pedestrian master plan, which will assist with efforts to apply for grant funds for these projects.

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## PROGRAMMED SAFETY INITIATIVES

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### Retime Intersections to Improve Timing for All Road Users

DOT recently received Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA) grant funds from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to retime intersections in San José's greater downtown area. The grant will provide for retiming efforts to better reflect changes in travel modes and increased walking, cycling, and scooter activity. The project will include retiming during off-peak hours and weekends, and greater use of Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs) which give pedestrians the walk signal before the conflicting vehicle turn movement.

### Leverage the Pavement Maintenance Program

DOT's pavement maintenance program is redesigning streets to improve safety and comfort for all roadway users. Typical safety measures include reducing vehicle lane widths to reduce speeds and installing bike lanes and enhanced crosswalks.

### Street Lighting

To date, over 27,000 streetlights have been converted to LED, many with a smart streetlight monitoring and control system. The remaining approximate 37,000 streetlights will be converted to smart LED technology with funding from Measure T, beginning in 2020.

### Capital Improvement Projects

San José has been awarded a total of \$29 million in grant funds for capital improvement projects on the Vision Zero corridors. Another \$45 million has been awarded for safety projects and programs in other areas. In addition to prioritizing limited City resources on quick build projects, San José will continue to pursue grant funds for capital projects, focusing on corridors where the data shows there is a need.





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## San José Elected Officials

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**Mayor** | Sam Liccardo

**Vice Mayor, District 1** | Charles “Chappie” Jones

**District 2** | Sergio Jimenez

**District 3** | Raul Perez

**District 4** | Lan Diep

**District 5** | Magdalena Carrasco

**District 6** | Devora “Dev” Davis

**District 7** | Maya Esparza

**District 8** | Sylvia Arenas

**District 9** | Pam Foley

**District 10** | Johnny Khamis

## San José Department of Transportation

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**Leadership Team** | John Ristow, Laura Wells, Lily Lim-Tsao, Jessica Zenk, Rick Scott

**Vision Zero Team** | Jesse Mintz-Roth, Vu Dao, Anthony Chung, Angelina Uribe, Cordell Bailey, Lam Cruz

## San José Police Department

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Chief Edgardo Garcia, Deputy Chief David Tindall, Lt. Stephen Lagorio, Cpt. Jason Dwyer, Ofc. Steven Jeffrey

## Advisory Committee

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### City of San José

**Mayor’s Office** | Scott Green | **City Manager’s Office** | Jim Ortbal

**Parks (Trails)** | Yves Zsutty | **Planning** | Alexander Powell | **Economic Development** | Salvador Alvarez

### Santa Clara County

**MTA** | Lauren Ledbetter, Lola Torney

**Public Health Department** | Alice Kawaguchi, Veena Raghavan | **Social Services Agency** | Diana Miller

**Medical Examiner-Coroner** | Michelle A. Jorden, Joséfina Covarrubias

### Advocates

**California Walks** | Nikita Sinha, Theresa Do | **Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition** | John Cordes

**DOT Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee** | Brandon Alvarado | **AARP** | Fred Buzo | **Catalyze SV** | Alex Shoor